

Congresswoman Louise Slaughter (NY-28), Congressman Brian Higgins (NY-27) and Congressman Chris Lee (NY-26) called passage of H.R. 3371, the Airline Safety and Pilot Training Improvement Act of 2009, a strong first step forward to improve the safety of air travel in the United States. This bipartisan legislation includes a number of long overdue reforms that address aviation safety and passenger confidence in the wake of the Continental Connection Flight 3407 tragedy that claimed the lives of 50 people on February 12, 2009. Among the key provisions of the bill are measures to combat pilot fatigue, increase commercial pilot licensing requirements, improve training practices and establish an electronic pilot records database. To watch the Western New York's delegations remarks on the House floor please follow these links (To view Congresswoman Slaughter's [HERE](#) , Congressman Higgins' click [HERE](#) , and Congressman Lee's remarks click [HERE](#)).

"The tragedy of Flight 3407 awakened Western New Yorkers to the lack of training and standards in the regional airline industry," said Congresswoman Slaughter. "Today I'm proud that the House is moving forward with legislation that I believe includes a strong new set of guidelines for improving passenger and crew safety. With vital input from the families of Flight 3407, measures in this bill mean safer flights for all of us."

"I am pleased that the House of Representatives was able to come together and support these important reforms to airline safety," said Congressman Lee. **"The strong bipartisan cooperation and the swift action to pass this legislation is a testament to the courage and strength of the Flight 3407 families, who have worked tirelessly to enact these meaningful reforms."**

"Out of tragedy comes promise for safer air travel for all passengers moving forward," said Congressman Higgins. "This bittersweet legislative victory demonstrates the good that can come when a community and government join together to create positive change."

"H.R. 3371 represents the hard work and collaboration of our group and the many parties involved in the House, particularly the Western New York delegation," said Kevin Kuwik, who lost his girlfriend Lorin Maurer in the crash. "We are disappointed with the potential loophole in regards to pilot qualifications. But on the whole, the bill contains many positive measures and we will continue to fight for the Airline Transport Pilot license requirement."

The *Airline Safety and Pilot Training Improvement Act of 2009* includes several key provisions:

- **Air Carrier Safety and Pilot Training Task Force.** Establishes a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Task Force that will identify aviation industry best practices regarding: pilot training, pilot professional standards, and inter-carrier information sharing, mentoring and other safety-related practices. The Task Force shall report to Congress every 180 days on air carrier progress implementing best practices, and make recommendations for legislative and regulatory action.

- **Implementation of National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) Recommendations**. Requires FAA to ensure that pilots are trained on stall recovery, upset recovery, and that airlines provide remedial training. Mandates the FAA to convene a multidisciplinary panel on pilot training for stick pusher operations, and then take action to implement the recommendations of the panel. Requires the Secretary of Transportation to provide an annual report to Congress on what the agency is doing to address each open NTSB recommendation pertaining to part 121 air carriers.

- **Pilot Qualifications, Screening, Mentoring & Professional Development.** Requires all commercial airline pilots to hold the rigorous, top-level FAA Airline Transport Pilot license. Establishes comprehensive pre-employment screening of prospective pilots including an assessment of a pilot's skills, aptitudes, airmanship and suitability for functioning in the airline's operational environment. Requires airlines to: establish pilot mentoring programs whereby highly experienced pilots will mentor junior pilots; create Pilot Professional Development Committees; modify training programs to accommodate new-hire pilots with different levels and types of flight experience; and provide leadership and command training to pilots in command (including complying with the "sterile cockpit rule").

- **Pilot Records Database.** Creates a Pilot Records Database, within 90 days, to provide airlines with fast, electronic access to a pilot's comprehensive record. Information included in the database will include pilot's licenses, aircraft ratings, check rides, Notices of Disapproval and other flight proficiency tests. FAA will maintain the database and airlines will be able to access the database for hiring purposes only.

- **Fatigue.** Directs the FAA to update and implement a new pilot flight and duty time rule and fatigue risk management plans within one year to more adequately track scientific research in the field of fatigue. Requires air carriers, within 90 days, to create fatigue risk management systems approved by FAA to proactively mitigate pilot fatigue. Studies the impact of pilot commuting on fatigue and provides preliminary results after four months to the FAA to be considered as part of the flight and duty time rulemaking.

- **Pilot Training Study.** Directs the Government Accountability Office to conduct a study of: current pilot academic training requirements compared to flight education provided by accredited two- and four-year universities and foreign academic requirements; FAA's oversight of flight schools, and student loan options available to student pilots.

- **Truth in Advertising.** Mandates that at the first page of an Internet website that sells airline tickets to disclose to the purchaser of each ticket the air carrier that operates each segment of the flight.